



**FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
VETERINARY CLINIC AND MILITARY
WORKING DOG KENNELS
AT MOUNTAIN HOME AFB**



**U.S. Air Force Air Combat Command
August 2003**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Air Combat Command
AICUZ	Air Installation Compatible Use Zone
AFB	Air Force Base
AFI	Air Force Instruction
AQCR	Air Quality Control Region
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
BASH	Bird/Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard
CAA	Clean Air Act
CATEX	Categorical Exclusion
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CWA	Clean Water Act
DA PAM	Department of the Army Pamphlet
DNL	Day-Night Average Sound Levels
DoD	Department of Defense
DOPAA	Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIAP	Environmental Impact Analysis Process
ERP	Environmental Restoration Program
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
GPM	Gallons per Minute
HAP	Hazardous Air Pollutant
HQ	Headquarters
IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
IDHW	Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
IICEP	Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning
MOA	Military Operations Area
MTR	Military Training Route
MWD	Military Working Dog
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
PI	Principal Investigator
PBS&J	Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan
PMP	Program Management Plan
ROI	Region of Influence
SFS	Security Forces Squadron
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SIP	State Implementation Plan
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

1.0 NAME OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Construction of new Veterinary Clinic and Military Working Dog (MWD) Kennels at Mountain Home AFB

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The proposed action would construct a new veterinary clinic and co-located MWD kennel at the northern portion of the base near the main gate and existing hospital area. The veterinary clinic would comprise 2500 square feet and will have separate examination rooms, surgery, and prep spaces for greater productivity of the veterinary staff. An asphalt-paved parking area would be constructed southeast of the veterinary building and would include approximately 12 parking spaces, including one handicap space. Although the proposed action would result in a modernized facility, there will be no expansion in veterinary services provided. The MWD kennel will be located northeast of the veterinary clinic and will comprise approximately 2500 to 3000 square feet. The kennel will include two office areas, a storage room, reception area, restroom, break room, food preparation area, treatment room, and eight runs within the kennel area. An asphalt-paved parking area would be constructed outside the kennel area and would include approximately 12 parking spaces, including one handicap space.

In addition to the proposed action, the Air Force evaluated a No Action Alternative, which is to continue to use the current veterinary clinic and separate MWD kennel. This action will force the existing veterinary clinic to operate in a cramped, code-deficient, and inefficient conditions and impact the mission readiness of the MWDs. An alternative not carried forward was to use an offbase veterinary clinic to support the base's pet population. This alternative was not considered due to the great distance of the nearest veterinary clinic and the security risks of housing MWDs in an off-base vet clinic.

3.0 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This Environmental Assessment analyzes the potential environmental impacts from the Proposed Action or alternatives. According to the analysis in this EA, implementation of the proposed action or alternatives at Mountain Home AFB would not result in either significant impacts in any resource category or significantly affect existing conditions at Mountain Home AFB. The following summarizes and highlights the results of the analysis by resource category.

Airspace Management and Safety: No impacts or changes to airspace management, runway operations and safety would result from the proposed action. Moving the current clinic and kennel further away from the runway area and closer to the existing hospital would enhance the safety and well-being of MWDs.

Noise: Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not noticeably change the noise conditions at the base. Noise levels in the current MWD kennel exceed the tolerable limits set by Air Force standards. Moving the MWD kennel farther from the runway into a lower noise zone would benefit the MWDs.

Land Use and Transportation: Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not noticeably change the baseline conditions. The proposed action location is designated as open space on the base's *General Plan*. Construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel may require reclassification of the land use from open space to community (commercial) in the *General Plan*. A short

road would be constructed from Hope Drive to access parking lots for the veterinary clinic and the MWD kennel. No increases in overall traffic at the base would be expected.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice: Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would result in a no net-loss or gain of employees or base personnel, and no concerns regarding socioeconomics and environmental justice.

Air Quality: Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not be expected to impact air quality. No change in operational emissions from the current veterinary clinic and MWD kennel is expected. The new facilities would be heated in the same manner as in the current facilities. No additional emissions are anticipated from personnel traveling to the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel, since the same portion already travel to the existing facilities. No increase in energy use or consumption is anticipated due to application of modern standards for construction and energy efficiency.

Hazardous Materials and Waste: No new types of hazardous waste streams would be created, no new permits would have to be obtained, and there would be no changes in the types of hazardous materials stored on base for the proposed action. Hazardous waste would continue to be reduced at Mountain Home AFB as it has over the last six years. The proposed location of the access road leading to the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel lies on the outer edge of ERP site ST-35. As such, soils excavated from construction of the access road may require special handling and disposal as a hazardous waste.

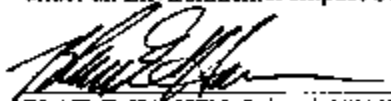
Water Resources: Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not be expected to impact water resources. No wetlands or playas are located within the proposed action location. In addition, no additional groundwater would be drawn to support the proposed structures.

Natural Resources: Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not be expected to impact natural resources. Construction for the proposed action would disturb one to two acres of land. There are no federally-recognized threatened or endangered species or critical habitats located on base. The project area may require displacement of sagebrush, which is controlled by the base's sagebrush protection plan. This plan does not restrict development in sagebrush protection areas, but does serve to minimize development in these areas. The exact footprint of the new construction may be configured to minimize impacts depending on the final design and layout.

Cultural Resources: There would be no adverse effects to National Register-listed or eligible cultural resources due to the implementation of the proposed action or alternatives. No significant archaeological resources have been identified in the proposed project area. No impacts to architectural resources are expected under the proposed action. The current veterinary clinic and MWD kennel buildings are not listed on the National Register as historic structures, nor are they World War II or Cold War structures.

4.0 CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the EA, which has been conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality regulations, and Air Force Instruction 32-7061, implementing the proposed action would not result in significant impacts to human health or the natural environment. Therefore, a Finding of No Significant Impact is warranted and further analysis under an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.


BLAIR E. HANSEN, Colonel, USAF
Commander, 366th Fighter Wing

13 Oct 03
Date

Availability Ad

Environmental Assessment For Veterinary Clinic and Military Working Dog Kennels at Mountain Home AFB

The U.S. Air Force has approved a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Construction of a new Veterinary Clinic and Military Working Dog Kennel (MWD Kennel) at the Mountain Home Air Force Base, ID.

The Air Force has approved a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the construction of a new veterinary clinic and co-located MWD Kennel at the northern portion of the Mountain Home Air Force Base near the main gate and existing hospital area. The veterinary clinic would comprise 2500 square feet and will have separate examination rooms, surgery, and prep spaces for greater productivity of the veterinary staff. The MWD Kennel will be located northeast of the veterinary clinic and will comprise approximately 2500 to 3000 square feet.

For more information, the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is available for review at the 366th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office starting December 8, 2003.

To request a copy of the FONSI, please contact the 366th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office at (208) 828-6800; the e-mail address is 366wgpa@mountainhome.af.mil

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1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 Introduction

The United States Air Force and Mountain Home Air Force Base (AFB) propose to construct a new veterinary clinic facility for the Mountain Home AFB military working dogs (MWD) and the base pet population and a new MWD kennel. The new veterinary clinic facility will comprise at least 2500 square feet and will have separate examination rooms, surgery, and prep spaces for greater productivity of the veterinary staff. New kennel space for the MWDs is also required and will consist of a structure that is approximately 2500 to 3000 square feet. This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to analyze the potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed action in accordance with the requirements of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA) (Public Law [P.L.] 91-190, 42 United States Code 4321 *et seq.*) as amended in 1975 by P.L. 94-52 and P.L. 94-83. In addition, this document was prepared in accordance with the following:

- The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA* (40 CFR 1500-1508); and
- AFI 32-7061 (*The Environmental Impact Analysis Process* [EIAP], 32 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 989), which implements Section 102 (2) of NEPA.

Section 1.2 provides background information on Mountain Home AFB. The purpose and need for the proposed action are described in Section 1.3.

A detailed description of the proposed action and the alternatives under consideration, including the No Action Alternative, is provided in Section 2.0. Section 3.0 describes the existing conditions of various environmental resources that could be affected if the proposed action were implemented. Section 4.0 describes how those resources would be affected by implementation of the proposed action and the No Action Alternative. Section 5.0 addresses the cumulative effects of the proposed action, as well as other recent past, current, and future actions that may be implemented in the region of influence (ROI) for the proposed action.

1.2 Background

Mountain Home AFB is located on the Mountain Home Plateau in southwestern Idaho approximately 40 miles southeast of Boise and approximately 10 miles southwest of the city of Mountain Home in Elmore County, Idaho (Figure 1-1).

The existing veterinary clinic was built as a semi-permanent building that has expired its 25-year useful life expectancy. The present MWD kennel is not located adjacent to the veterinary clinic. Since September 2001, the existing kennels have failed inspection standards that are set to ensure the health, well being, and mission readiness of the MWDs. In addition, the existing MWD kennel is located near the runway and MWDs are affected by the jet noise when planes land and take-off.

1.3 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a veterinary clinic and MWD kennel that meets current base standards, is located outside a high noise area, and will better support the base's pet population and MWDs.

The need for the new veterinary facility is based on several inadequacies of the existing facility. The current veterinary building is approximately 68% of its required size according to DoD Medical Space Planning Criteria. The cost of repairs or modifications to the existing facility exceeds the regulatory limit of 70% of the value of the facility.

Since September 2001 the 366 Security Forces Squadron (SFS) MWD Kennels have consistently failed to meet inspection standards set forth by AFI 31-202 and Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 190-142; standards which have been set in place to ensure the health and well being of the MWDs. Repeated discrepancies for the current MWD kennel include the following:

- Noise levels at the MWD kennel are above the allowable noise levels of 75 dBA at any 24-hour time as set for by AFI 31-202;
- Kennel runs are not properly configured and allow canine waste products to be sprayed into adjoining runs when being cleaned. This presents a biological hazard to the MWDs;
- The kennel design leads to anxiety resulting in the MWDs chewing on the chain link fence, damaging their teeth;
- The kennels do not have a sufficient supply of hot water to clean the entire facility at one time. The lack of hot water also interferes with the regular grooming and bathing required to be performed on the MWDs;
- The ventilation system allows moisture to accumulate, causing the ceiling material to deteriorate allowing fiberglass insulation to drop into dog runs, water dishes, and food bowls creating a health hazard to the MWDs;
- The drain in the kennel is not properly designed to current standards. The floor drain is required to be a 6-inch drain; while the drain in the current kennel is only 3.5 inches. This drain size does not allow water to drain effectively and creates a potential for increased insect and bacterial growth;
- The siding on the kennel building does not prevent the entrance of disease carrying rodents;
- The current kennel does not contain a food preparation area that is separate from the MWDs, which is mandated by DA PAM 190-12 Section 7-3.

Impacts of no action will force the existing veterinary clinic to continue to operate in cramped, code-deficient, and inefficient conditions. The mission readiness of the MWDs may at times be impacted due to poor facilities that are not in compliance with standards in AFI 31-202.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

This chapter describes proposed action to implement the construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. In addition, the No Action Alternative in which the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would remain at their current location is described.

2.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action would construct a new veterinary clinic and co-located MWD kennel at the northern portion of the base just southeast of the main gate (Figure 2-1). The veterinary clinic building would be located south of the existing windbreak and north of the JP-8 fuel line. The veterinary clinic would comprise 2500 square feet and will have separate examination rooms, surgery, and prep spaces for greater productivity of the veterinary staff. An asphalt-paved parking area would be constructed southeast of the veterinary building and would include approximately 12 parking spaces, including one handicap space. The parking lot would be accessed from Hope Drive (Figure 2-2). Although the proposed action would result in a modernized facility, there will be no expansion in veterinary services provided.

The MWD kennel will be located northeast of the veterinary clinic and will comprise approximately 2500 to 3000 square feet. The kennel will include two office areas, a storage room, reception area, restroom, break room, food preparation area, treatment room, and eight runs within the kennel area (Figure 2-3). An asphalt-paved parking area would be constructed outside the kennel area and would include approximately 12 parking spaces, including one handicap space. The kennel parking lot will be separate from the veterinary clinic parking lot and will be accessed from Hope Drive.

2.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would be to continue to use the current veterinary clinic and separate MWD kennel. This action will force the existing veterinary clinic to operate in a cramped, code-deficient, and inefficient conditions. The mission readiness of the MWDs may at times be impacted due to poor facilities that are not in compliance with standards in AFI 31-202.

2.3 Alternatives Considered But Not Carried Forward

An alternative not carried forward was to use an off-base veterinary clinic to support the base's pet population. This alternative was not considered since the nearest veterinary clinic is located in Mountain Home, Idaho, approximately 10 miles from the base. The ability to quickly obtain treatment for a pet or a MWD is important to maintain the health and well being of the animal. Specifically, the closer the veterinary clinic is to the base may be the difference in life and death of the animal in cases of emergency. Housing MWDs in an off-base vet clinic would subject the MWDs to a higher security risk, in that the dogs could easily be eliminated by terrorists or other enemies.

2.4 EA Process

This EA examines the specific affected environment for each alternative, considers the current conditions of the affected environment, and compares those conditions that might occur under other alternatives, including the No Action Alternative. It also examines the cumulative impacts within the affected environment of these alternatives as well as past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions of the Air Force and other federal, state, and local agencies. The following steps are involved in the preparation of this EA.

1. *Coordinate with Governmental Agencies.*
2. *Prepare a draft EA.* The first comprehensive document for public agency review is the draft EA. This document examines the environmental impacts of the proposed action and action alternatives as well as the No Action Alternative.
3. *Announce that the draft EA has been prepared.* An advertisement, in the papers local to the proposed action, will be posted notifying the public as to the draft EA's availability for review in local libraries and at a web site (www.mountainhome.af.mil). After the draft EA is distributed, a 30-day public comment period begins.
4. *Provide a public comment period.* Our goal during this process is to solicit comments concerning the analysis presented in the draft EA.
5. *Prepare a final EA.* Following the public comment period, a final EA is prepared. This document is a revision (if necessary) of the draft EA, includes consideration of public comments, and provides the decisionmaker with a comprehensive review of the proposed action and the potential environmental impacts.
6. *Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).* The final step in the NEPA process is a signed FONSI if the analysis supports this conclusion or a determination that an Environmental Impact Statement would be required for the proposal.

2.5 Regulatory and Permit Requirements

This EA has been prepared in compliance with NEPA, other federal statutes, such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Orders, and other applicable statutes and regulations. The Air Force has initiated informal consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and with the Idaho Historic Preservation Officer.

2.6 Summary of Impacts

According to the analysis in this EA, implementation of the proposed action or alternatives at Mountain Home AFB would not result in either significant impacts in any resource category or

significantly affect existing conditions at Mountain Home AFB. The following summarizes and highlights the results of the analysis by resource category.

Air Quality. Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not be expected to impact air quality.

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes would occur to air quality compared to baseline conditions.

Water Resources. Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not be expected to impact water resources. No wetlands or playas are located within the proposed action location. In addition, no additional groundwater would be drawn to support the proposed structures. Under the No Action Alternative, no changes would occur to water resources compared to baseline conditions.

Natural Resources. Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not be expected to impact natural resources. However, construction of the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel may have impacts to sagebrush, which is managed by Mountain Home AFB's sagebrush protection plan.

Under the No Action alternative, no changes would occur to natural resources compared to baseline conditions.

Cultural Resources. There would be no adverse effects to National Register-listed or eligible cultural resources due to the implementation of the proposed action or alternatives.

Under the No Action alternative, no changes would occur to cultural resources compared to baseline conditions.

Land Use and Transportation. Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not noticeably change the baseline conditions. The proposed action location is designated as open space on the base's *General Plan*. Construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel may require reclassification of the land use from open space to community (commercial) in the *General Plan*. A short road would be constructed from Hope Drive to access parking lots for the veterinary clinic and the MWD kennel. No increases in overall traffic at the base would be expected.

Under the No Action alternative, no changes would occur to either land use or transportation compared to baseline conditions.

Hazardous Materials and Waste. No new types of hazardous waste streams would be created, no new permits would have to be obtained, and there would be no changes in the types of hazardous materials stored on based for the proposed action. Hazardous waste would continue to be reduced at Mountain Home AFB as it has over the last six years. The proposed location of the access road leading to the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel lies on the outer edge of ERP

site ST-35. As such, soils excavated from construction of the access road may require special handling and disposal as a hazardous waste.

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes would occur to hazardous materials and waste compared to baseline conditions.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice. Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would result in a no net-loss or gain of employees or base personnel.

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes would occur to socioeconomics and Environmental Justice compared to baseline conditions.

Noise. Implementation of the proposed action and alternatives would not noticeably change the noise conditions at the base. Noise levels in the current MWD kennel are dangerously close to noise tolerance levels allowed by AFI 31-202. Moving the MWD kennel farther from the runway into a lower noise zone would benefit the MWDs.

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes would occur to noise compared to baseline conditions.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Air Quality

Under provisions of the Clean Air Act (CAA), which is intended to improve the quality of the air we breathe, EPA sets limits on how much of a pollutant can be in the air anywhere in the United States. This ensures that all Americans have the same basic health and environmental protections. The law allows individual states to have stronger pollution controls, but states are not allowed to have weaker pollution controls than those set for the whole country. EPA calls these pollutants "criteria air pollutants" because the agency has regulated them by first developing health-based criteria (science-based guidelines) as the basis for setting permissible levels.

The significance of the pollutant concentration is determined by comparing it to the federal (national) and state air quality standards. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) are established by the USEPA for six criteria pollutants: ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter equal to or less than 10 microns (PM₁₀), and lead (Pb). NAAQS represent the maximum levels of background pollution that are considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety to protect public health and welfare. Short-term standards (1-, 8- and 24-hour periods) are established for pollutants contributing to acute health effects, while long-term standards (annual averages) are established for pollutants contributing to chronic health effects. The project is regulated by Title V requirements. It is a major source for NAAQS emissions, and a minor source of HAPS emissions.

Based on measured ambient criteria pollutant data, the USEPA designates areas of the U.S. as having air quality better than (attainment) or worse than (nonattainment) the NAAQS. Individual states are delegated the responsibility to regulate air quality in order to achieve or maintain air quality in attainment with these standards. States are required to develop a state implementation plan (SIP) that sets forth how the CAA provisions will be implemented within the state. The SIP is the primary means for the implementation, maintenance, and enforcement of the measures needed to attain and maintain the NAAQS in each state. According to plans outlined in the SIP, designated state and local agencies implement regulations to control sources of criteria pollutants.

Types and Sources of Air Quality Pollutants. Pollutants considered in the EA include the criteria pollutants measured by state and federal standards. These include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which are precursors to (indicators of) O₃, nitrogen oxides (NO_x), which are also precursors to O₃, as well as CO, SO₂, and PM₁₀. Airborne emissions of lead (Pb) are not addressed because no significant sources of these criteria pollutants are contained in the affected area and it is not associated with the proposed action and alternatives.

Location and Context of Affected Areas. The affected environment varies according to pollutant, the source of emissions, and meteorological and topographical considerations. Emissions released at high altitudes (such as aircraft emissions) or buoyant emissions (such as from a power plant smokestack) generally have larger areas of influence than non-buoyant ground-based emission sources. For pollutants that do not undergo a chemical reaction (PM₁₀

and SO₂), the affected area is generally restricted to a region in the immediate vicinity of the base. However, the region of concern for ozone and its precursors (NO_x and VOCs) is a larger regional area, because they undergo a chemical reaction and change as they disperse from the source.

Existing Setting – Mountain Home AFB. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) has primary jurisdiction over air quality and sources of stationary source emissions at Mountain Home AFB. Stationary source emissions at Mountain Home include jet engine testing, external and internal combustion sources, degreasing operations, storage tanks, fueling operations, solvent usage, surface coating, asphalt production, and miscellaneous general process operations. Fugitive source emissions include aircraft operations (take offs and landings) as well as associated, aerospace ground equipment, and ground support equipment. Emissions from aircraft landings and takeoff operations, as well as other flight operations include both based and transient aircraft. Actual emissions of criteria pollutants from the base are less than 100 tons/year. Table 3-1 summarizes calendar year 2001 actual and potential air emissions for each criteria pollutant and total Hazardous Air Pollutant (HAP) emissions at Mountain Home AFB for stationary sources and compares those emissions with the Title V operating permit applicability thresholds (USAF 2002). The project is regulated by Title V requirements. It is a major source for NAAQS emissions, and a minor source of HAPS emissions. There are also no air quality restrictions preventing the project.

Table 3-1: 2001 Air Pollutant Emission Summary (Tons/Year), Stationary and Fugitive Sources, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Mountain Home, Idaho (Mountain Home AFB, 2002)

Pollutant	Actual	Potential
	Stationary	Stationary
NO _x	28	210
CO	28	144
SO _x	2	12
VOCs	17	46
Particulates (PM)	2	15
Particulates (PM-10)	2	15
Total HAPs	2	4

NO_x = Oxides of Nitrogen

CO = Carbon monoxide

SO_x = Oxides of sulfur

VOCs = Volatile organic compounds

PM = Particulate matter

PM-10 = Particulate matter of 10 microns or less (respirable dust)

HAP = Hazardous Air Pollutant

Mountain Home AFB lies within the Idaho Intrastate Air Quality Control Region (AQCR) #63. This AQCR, which was developed for planning purposes, consists of 22 counties in central Idaho, including Elmore County. Air quality in the vicinity of Mountain Home AFB, the city of Mountain Home, and Elmore County is generally considered as very good. Air quality in the AQCR #63 has been designated as either in “attainment” or “unclassifiable/attainment” for

NAAQS. Due to the extremely large extent of the AQCR, base emissions from Mountain Home are compared to Elmore County. Table 3-2 summarizes the regional emissions of criteria pollutant and precursor emissions for Elmore County. Mountain Home AFB produces approximately 0.2 to 11 percent of the emissions for Elmore County.

Table 3-2 Regional Emissions for Mountain Home AFB Affected Environment					
	CO	VOCs	NO_x	SO_x	PM-10
Elmore County (emissions in tons/year)	16,543	2,572	3,027	398	8,565
Mountain Home AFB (percent of total emissions)	4.2	5.4	11.4	2.7	0.2

¹USEPA, 2002. National Emissions Trends (NET) Database, 1999 emissions data.

3.2 Water Resources

Mountain Home AFB is located within the C.J. Strike reservoir watershed and is situated in a small, very shallow basin with approximately 55 square miles of drainage area. Surface water tends to flow from northeast to southwest into Canyon Creek, which ultimately drains into the Snake River. No significant drainages or natural impoundments occur on the Mountain Home AFB. Topography at Mountain Home AFB is level and drainages are not well defined. Surface water runoff from thunderstorms and snowmelt tends to collect in small depressions. During spring snowmelts and rainfall, the small amount of surface water on the base flows into either two ephemeral stream channels or four man-made drainage ditches. No large natural drainages cross Mountain Home AFB and no 100-year floodplains have been identified in the area (FEMA maps 1988).

The results of a biological wetland survey, originally conducted in 1990 and revised in 1995, indicated nine playas or vernal pools on Mountain Home AFB. Playas are areas of seasonal water accumulation that evaporates as spring progresses into summer. They fall into the “problem area” category defined by the Army Corps of Engineers, because their lack of vegetation, high salinity and low organic matter content of the soil. However, the Army Corps of Engineers does consider them jurisdictional wetlands. While one of the playas supports a population of Davis’ peppergrass, a species of special concern, neither it nor any of the other playas are located within proposed veterinary clinic or MWD kennel project areas.

Mountain Home AFB relies on a regional, unconfined aquifer for water, which is shared with the city of Mountain Home and surrounding areas. Each day during late fall to early spring, approximately 800,000 gallons are pumped out by Mountain Home AFB and approximately 1.74 million gallons a day are pumped out by the city of Mountain Home. In comparison, each day during the summer months, approximately 6.0 million gallons are pumped out by Mountain Home AFB and approximately 6.8 million gallons are pumped out by the city of mountain Home. Currently, this rate of pumping exceeds the rate of recharge, and the water table is dropping at an average rate of 2.07 feet per year for Mountain Home AFB.

3.3 Natural Resources

Natural resources incorporate living, native or naturalized plant and animal species, and the habitats within which they occur. The affected area for natural resources includes Mountain Home AFB. Baseline data were gathered from existing studies such as the *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan for Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho* (USAF 2002a), as well as surveys for plants and animals, and waters of the United States including wetlands.

Vicinity of Mountain Home AFB. Prior to development, vegetation on and surrounding Mountain Home AFB consisted of sagebrush grasslands habitat. However, a regional history of development, agriculture, grazing, frequent fires, and exotic plant species invasions have removed all but scattered remnants of the original sagebrush habitat. Most (93 percent) of the base has been altered or developed, including conversions to landscaped areas, buildings, or paved lots. Only about 7 percent of base land has remaining native habitat. They consist of small patches of Wyoming big sagebrush located on the periphery of the base (Figure 3-1). These areas are not considered pristine, as exotic species invasion and disturbance has impacted species composition. However, the base's Sagebrush Protection Plan controls impacts to sagebrush from development activities.

Wildlife on and immediately surrounding Mountain Home AFB is limited due to the lack of suitable or undisturbed habitat for most species. However, some disturbances-tolerant species such as coyotes, jackrabbits, voles, American robins, Canada geese, house finchs, western meadowlarks, ravens, curlews, avocets, burrowing owls and badgers are commonly found in the undeveloped and landscaped areas of the base (USAF 2002). Aquatic habitat is limited to two small man-made ditches, and seven ponds (including sewage lagoons). In addition, nine small playas or vernal pools exist on base and contain water for short periods in the spring.

No federally-listed threatened or endangered species, or candidate species are known to occur on Mountain Home AFB (USAF 1998b). Appendix C lists species with potential to occur within the habitat located on or near Mountain Home AFB. The majority of the base has been surveyed for both plant and animal species of concern. These surveys concluded that due to the disturbed nature of the habitats available on the base, the potential for occurrences on base is minimal. One Bureau of Land Management state-listed sensitive species, the burrowing owl, is known to occur on base. The burrowing owl species occupies abandoned mammal burrows in disturbed areas with short vegetation in the surrounding area (USAF 1998b). The owl can hunt at all times of day and night, however, most prey is captured at dawn and dusk. They frequently hover a short distance above ground, searching for insects, amphibians, small mammals, and birds that comprise their diet.

Waterfowl concentrate along the Snake River and use it year-round. Because of the proximity to the base, these waterbirds stopover at the storage lagoons. Mallards, other ducks, and geese use the storage lagoons. A greater number of birds migrate through the area during the spring and fall, but some birds are found year round. Canada geese, mallards, wood ducks, blue-winged teal, buffleheads, goldeneyes, coots, western grebes, and avocets occur as well. Because the storage lagoon supports waterfowl, bald eagles may forage here during the winter. However, bald eagles have never been reported.

3.4 Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are prehistoric and historic sites, buildings, districts, or objects that are important to a culture or community. Cultural resources are divided into three categories: archaeological resources, architectural resources, and traditional cultural resources.

Archaeological resources are places where people changed the ground surface or left artifacts or other physical remains (e.g., arrowheads or bottles). Archaeological resources can be classed as either sites or isolates and may be either prehistoric or historic in age. Isolates often contain only one or two artifacts, while sites are usually larger and contain more artifacts.

Architectural resources are standing buildings, dams, canals bridges, and other structures.

Traditional cultural resources are associated with the cultural practices and beliefs of a living community that link that community to its past and help maintain its cultural identity. Most traditional cultural resources in the affected environment are associated with Native Americans. Traditional cultural resources may include, but are not limited to, archaeological resources, location of historic events, sacred areas, sources of raw materials for making tools, sacred objects or traditional hunting and gathering areas.

Under the National Historic Preservation Act and various federal regulations, only significant cultural resources are considered when assessing the possible impacts of a federal action. Significant archaeological, architectural, and traditional cultural resources include those that are listed and those recommended as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register 2002).

The significance of archaeological and architectural resources is usually determined by using specific criteria (listed in 36 CFR 60.4), including: association with an important events, association with a famous individual, embodiment of the characteristics of a period, and ability to contribute to scientific research. Cultural resources must usually be at least 50 years old to be considered eligible for listing. However, more recent structures, such a Cold War-era resources, may warrant protection if they manifest “exceptional significance.” Traditional cultural resources can be evaluated for National Register eligibility as well. However, even if a traditional cultural resource is determined to be not eligible for the National Register, it may still be significant to a particular Native American tribe. In this case, such resources may be protected under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and Executive Order 13007 addressing sacred Indian sites. The significance of a Native American traditional cultural resource is determined by consulting with the appropriate Native American Tribes.

Vicinity of Mountain Home AFB. Mountain Home AFB has been surveyed for archeological and architectural resources (USAF 2002a). This survey identified five historic archaeological sites, none of which are considered eligible for listing on the National Register (USAF 2002a). There are no National Register-listed archaeological sites at Mountain Home AFB (USAF 1998b).

While there are no National Register-listed architectural resources at Mountain Home AFB, six World War II structures and five Cold War structures at the base are eligible for listing on the National Register. Other buildings from the Cold War-era also may be eligible for the National

Register, but have not yet been evaluated (USAF 1998b). No traditional resources have been identified at Mountain Home AFB (USAF 1998b).

3.5 Land Use and Transportation

Land uses are frequently regulated by management plans, policies, ordinances, and regulations that determine the types of uses that are allowable or protect specially designated or environmentally sensitive areas. Special use areas are identified by agencies as being worthy of more rigorous management.

Transportation resources refer to the infrastructure and equipment required for the movement of people, raw materials, and manufactured goods in geographic space. Particular emphasis for this analysis is given to the road and rail networks in the region. The region of influence for land use and transportation resources consists of Mountain Home AFB and the area in the immediate vicinity.

3.5.1 Land Use

Land uses on Mountain Home AFB are grouped by function in distinct geographic areas. The runway bisects the base from northwest to the southeast. Lands to the southwest are largely undeveloped. Undeveloped lands are commonly called open space in planning documents and may include grazing areas, safety buffers, or other similar land uses. Developed areas occur in the central and northeastern portions of the base. Main categories of developed land uses include airfield and flight line, industrial areas, administrative facilities, housing, recreation, sites, and community as well as medical facilities (Figure 3-2). Adopted plans and programs guide land use planning on Mountain Home AFB. The primary planning document for Mountain Home AFB is the *General Plan*, which provides an overall perspective concerning development opportunities and constraints. The base's *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan* is used to coordinate natural resource management. Base plans and studies present factors affecting both on- and off-base land use and include recommendations to assist on-base officials and local community leaders in ensuring compatible development. The location for the proposed veterinary clinic and MWD kennel structures lies within the open space category of the base's land use plan (USAF 1994).

3.5.2 Transportation

Access to the main gate of Mountain Home AFB is provided from Airbase Road off of State Route 67. The project site is located southeast of the main gate and west of the hospital. Access to the project site would be from Hope Drive, which carries local traffic to the hospital complex. Hope Drive is a two lane, asphalt-paved road that intersects with Airbase Road.

3.6 Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste

Hazardous materials are identified and regulated under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act; the Occupational Safety and Health Act; and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act. Hazardous materials have been defined in AFI 32-7086, Hazardous Materials Management, to include any substance with special characteristics that could harm people, plants, or animals when released.

Hazardous wastes are generated from a variety of functions on base, including aircraft support; wastewater treatment; soil and groundwater remediation; training exercises; civil engineering; printing; medical facilities; services; and security. Because of the magnitude of flight operations, aircraft support functions are typically major sources of hazardous wastes at Air Force bases. Aircraft flight operations and maintenance at each base, as well as many other activities, require the use and storage of a variety of hazardous material which include flammable and combustible liquids, acids, corrosives, caustics, anti-icing chemicals, compressed gasses, solvents, paints, paint thinners, pesticides, petroleum hydrocarbons, batteries, hydraulic fluids, fire retardant, and photographic chemicals.

Facilities that generate more than 2,200 pounds of hazardous waste or 2.2 pounds of acute hazardous waste per month are considered to be large quantity generators by the USEPA. According to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Mountain Home AFB is considered to be a large quantity generator. Hazardous wastes at the base are managed under the Mountain Home AFB Wing Plan 3208-02 Hazardous Waste Management Plan. Hazardous waste generation at Mountain Home AFB is currently largely affected by maintenance activities associated with base-assigned aircraft. Types of waste generated at Mountain Home AFB include combustible solvents from parts washers, fuel filters, metal-contaminated spent acids from aircraft corrosion control, painting wastes, battery acid, corrosive liquids, washracks sludge and fuel from tank cleanouts. The shops that provide maintenance support have been identified as primary contributors to hazardous waste streams at Mountain Home AFB. They include: Aerospace Ground Equipment; Corrosion Control; Fuels Management; Munitions and Armament Shops; In-Squadron Maintenance; and the Wheel and Tire Shop. Numerous other shops (e.g., avionics, egress systems, electrical metals, hydraulics, radio, and jet engine) collectively add to hazardous waste streams. Currently, all maintenance activities are performed at Mountain Home AFB with the exception of depot-level maintenance, which occurs every four years at separate maintenance facilities on other bases. Idaho Hazardous Waste Generator Annual Report for CY 2002 reported 115,674 lbs of hazardous waste generated by the base.

Waste minimization programs are mandated by law and Air Force policy. The Air Force has implemented a continuous process for minimizing waste, which includes identifying opportunities for substitution of non-hazardous materials. Mountain Home AFB has reduced the volume of hazardous waste generated on the base from 169,977 pounds in 1996 to 90,920 pounds in 2001. The 90,920 pounds generated in 2001 included 30,000 pounds of light bulbs disposed during the Energy Savings Performance Program (USAF 2002). This reduction is attributed to Mountain Home AFB's policy of substituting equipment and materials used in the maintenance processes to reduce the amounts or kinds of hazardous waste generated. Mountain Home AFB also participates in a closed loop oil-recycling program. This program has eliminated used oil as Resource Conservation and Recovery Act waste stream.

The *Hazardous Materials Wing Plan 3209-02 Emergency Planning and Response Plan* addresses storage locations on base and proper handling procedures for all hazardous materials to minimize the potential for spills and releases, including general aircraft maintenance activities. If a spill occurs, the plan outlines how base personnel should respond, including notification, containment, decontamination, and cleanup of spilled materials to minimize the adverse effects of a spill. Hazardous wastes are managed in accordance with the *Mountain Home AFB Wing Plan 3208-02 Hazardous Waste Management Plan*.

Mountain Home AFB inventories and tracks all hazardous material and established waste streams. Wastes generated on base are stored at the central collection facility not in excess of 90 days at which point they are transported off site to a certified treat and storage disposal facility.

A fuel spill occurred at an area south of the hospital and east of the project site in 1985 or 1986 when a grading machine severed a Jet Fuel pipeline (ATSDR 1999). The site was assigned as Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) site ST-35 (Figure 3-3). Approximately 800 to 1,000 gallons of jet fuel were released, of which 350 to 400 gallons were recovered by the base. Soils were excavated over a 50-foot by 3.5-foot area around the spill. The soil was removed to a land farm on the base for remediation. Soil screening showed no residual jet fuel contamination. Samples were collected for analysis due to a lack of visible signs of fuel contamination. No further remedial action was required. No public health hazard is associated with the soil at the site (ATSDR 1999). The main base JP-8 receipt lines enter the base at this proposed location. The lines are buried between 18-24 inches and are not otherwise protected.

3.7 Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice

This section of the EA focuses on the general features of the economy – employment, earnings, population, and housing – that could be affected by the proposed action or alternatives. The affected area for socioeconomics is composed of the counties and communities whose economies are closely related to activities at the military installation. For Mountain Home AFB, the affected area includes Ada, Elmore, and Owyhee counties.

Employment. Mountain Home, the county seat of Elmore County, is primarily a rural community of 10,743 residents (1999) with a strong ranching and agri-business economy. Unemployment rates for Elmore County were 6.5% in 1999 and 6.1% in 2000. Mountain Home AFB is the largest employer in Elmore County, providing employment for approximately 4,500 military employees and 877 civilian employees.

The value of payroll associated with active-duty military and civilian personnel at the base was approximately \$162 million in FY 2001 (USAF 2002). Mountain Home AFB also purchases significant quantities of goods and services from local regional firms. In FY 2001, annual expenditures by the base were over \$61 million. The Air Force estimates that the economic stimulus of Mountain Home AFB created approximately 1,690 secondary jobs in the civilian economy (USAF 2002).

Population. Population in the tri-county region was 340,678 in 2000, an increase of 44 percent from 1990. For comparison, the population of Idaho grew by 28 percent to 1,293,953 in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2003).

Approximately 77 percent of the 2000 population of the three counties resided in incorporated communities. These cities and towns range in size from Boise (with a population of 185,787) to Grand View (with a population of 470). The largest cities are Boise, Meridian (34,919 persons), Mountain Home (11,143), Eagle (11,085), and Garden City (10,624) (U.S. Census Bureau 2003).

The socioeconomic analysis in the F-22 EIS (referenced in USAF 2002) estimated the place of residence (by zip code) of active-duty personnel stationed at Mountain Home AFB. The majority of military personnel (approximately 57 percent) who reside off base live in the city of Mountain Home. The next largest group resides in Boise (approximately 7 percent). Other communities have small numbers of active-duty military residents (USAF 2002). Total on-base population was 6,282 in FY 2001.

Housing. There were a total of 133,495 housing units in the tri-county region in 2000, with a homeowner vacancy rate of about 2.7 percent and a rental vacancy rate of about 8.1 percent. Of the vacant units, 4.0 percent were for seasonal and recreational use (U.S. Census Bureau 2003).

The Housing Market Analysis (USAF 2002) evaluated all aspects of the housing market area and the military's requirements from 1999 to 2004. The housing market area for Mountain Home AFB is defined as a 30-minute commute time from the installation's headquarters building during peak traffic and includes portions of Elmore and Owyhee Counties. The report concluded that there is a private sector housing deficit for the military families (1,688 units) and unaccompanied personnel (226 units).

The city of Mountain Home is the only significant population and housing center contained within the housing market area boundary. In 2000, there were 401 vacant housing units in the city of Mountain Home and the vacancy rate in the city was 8.5 percent. Most of the vacant housing units were rental units (12.8 percent) while the vacancy rate for homeowner units was much lower at 2.8 percent. Over the period 1990 - 1999, an average of 104 housing unit permits were issued annually in the city of Mountain Home and of these, 71 were for single-family homes (USAF 2002).

Of the active-duty personnel assigned to Mountain Home AFB in FY 2001, 53 percent resided on base in government family and unaccompanied housing (USAF 2002).

3.8 Noise

Noise is defined as unwanted or objectionable sound. The effects of noise on people can include general annoyance, interference with speech communication, sleep disturbance and, in the extreme, hearing impairment.

The standard unit employed for noise measurements is the decibel (dB). Decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale, which quantifies sound intensity in a manner similar to the Richter Scale's use for earthquake magnitudes. Thus, an increase of three dB doubles the noise level; a decrease of three dB halves the noise level. The human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies within the sound spectrum. Therefore, the "A-weighted" noise scale, which weights

the frequencies to which humans are sensitive, is used for measurements. Noise levels using A-weighted measurements are sometimes written db(A) or dBA.

As noise fluctuates from moment to moment, noise levels over a specific time period are condensed into a single number called the Equivalent Noise Level (L_{eq}). The L_{eq} is the level of constant sound that, in a given situation and time period, has the same energy as does time-varying sound. In other words, the fluctuating sound levels of traffic noise are represented in terms of steady noise level with the same energy content; $L_{eq(3)}$ would signify a three hour average. When no time period is indicated, a one-hour average may be assumed.

At Mountain Home AFB, noise levels from flight operations exceeding ambient background noise typically occur beneath the main approach and departure corridors and in areas immediately adjacent to parking ramps and aircraft staging areas. As aircraft take off and gain altitude, their contribution to the noise environment drops to levels indistinguishable from the ambient background. The height at which the noise becomes indistinguishable varies depending on the aircraft and meteorological conditions.

As would be expected, the highest noise levels generated by take off and landing are found at the runway on Mountain Home AFB. Noise studies, including those completed under the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) program, express day-night levels (DNL) as contours developed from the following data: aircraft types, runway-use patterns, engine power settings, altitude profiles, flight-track locations, airspeed, number of operations per flight track, engine maintenance, and time of day. DNL is an energy average (with nighttime weighting) based on noise levels in dBA. These studies were based on an average busy day, which represents airfield activity during a 24-hour period when the airfield is in full operation. The advantage of the “average busy day” approach is that it is unaffected by daily, monthly, and yearly fluctuations in the rate of use by individual aircraft at the base. Table 3-3 presents the on-base acres affected by noise levels of 65 DNL and greater. Noise levels contours are presented in Figure 3-4.

Table 3-3: Area affected by Baseline Noise Contours in the Vicinity of Mountain Home AFB (USAF, 2002)	
Noise Contour (DNL)	Acres Affected: On-base
65-70	1,068
70-75	1,125
75-80	864
80-85	595
85+	850
Total	4,502

The current veterinary clinic building is located within the 65 dBA DNL noise contour. The current MWD kennel is within the 70 dBA DNL noise contour. In May of 1996 a Noise Dosimetry study was conducted at the MWD kennel. The allowable noise tolerance set for by

AFI 31-202 Para 9.1 section 9.1.2 is 75 dBA at any 24-hour time period. The study conducted at the kennels showed an inside reading of 81.5 dBA and outside reading of 72.5 dBA, which is dangerously close to the tolerable limit. The 75 dBA tolerable limit assumes that the building will buffer the outside noise; this is not the case at the proposed current location of the MWD kennel.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Air Quality

4.1.1 Proposed Action

The air quality analysis for the proposed action at Mountain Home AFB quantifies the changes due to the construction and operation of the proposed veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. The Clean Air Act (CAA) prohibits federal agencies from supporting activities that do not conform to a State Implementation Plan (SIP) approved by the USEPA. To assess the effects of the proposed action, analysis must include direct and indirect emissions from all activities that would affect the regional air quality. Emissions from the proposed action are either “presumed to conform” (based on emissions levels that are considered insignificant in the context of overall regional emissions) or must demonstrate conformity with approved SIP provisions.

Emissions generated by construction projects are temporary in nature and would end when construction is complete. The emissions from fugitive dust (PM₁₀) would be significantly less due to the implementation of control measures in accordance with standard construction practices. For instance, frequent spraying of water on exposed soil during construction, proper soil stockpiling methods, and prompt replacement of ground cover or pavement are standard landscaping procedures that could be used to minimize the amount of dust generated during construction. Using efficient grading practices and avoiding long periods where engines are running at idle may reduce combustion emissions from construction equipment. Vehicular combustion emissions from construction worker commuting may be reduced by carpooling.

No change in direct operational emissions from the current veterinary clinic and MWD kennel is expected. Both facilities would be heated in the same manner as in the current facilities. No additional emissions are anticipated from personnel traveling to the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel, since the same portion already travel to the existing facilities.

No increase in energy use or consumption is anticipated. Although the final design for the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel is in progress, the Air Force typically applies modern standards for construction and energy efficiency.

4.1.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs of base operations would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

4.2 Water Resources

4.2.1 Proposed Action

Construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would require no additional water resources. Both buildings would be served by the Mountain Home AFB's current drinking water and sanitary sewer systems. Filtration would control storm water runoff and soil erosion from the site. Prior to the start of construction, silt fences, storm drain inlet and outlet protection and other appropriate standard construction practices will be implemented. In accordance with the base's NPDES permit, the contractor will provide a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to construction activities. With the implementation of the SWPPP and the standard practices, environmental consequences from erosion and sedimentation would be negligible. There would be no impacts to water resources from point source or non-point sources with implementation of the proposed action. If the project exceeds one acre or more, the contractor must file a notice of intent for a NPDES Storm Water Construction General Permit.

4.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs of base operations would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

4.3 Natural Resources

4.3.1 Proposed Action

Terrestrial Communities

Under the proposed action, construction would disturb between one and two acres of land east of the Shoppette and north of Hope Drive. The majority of this area is currently undeveloped, with the exception of the rail line and JP-8 pipeline. The project area may require displacement of sagebrush, which is controlled by the base's sagebrush protection plan. This plan does not restrict development in sagebrush protection areas, but does serve to minimize development in these areas. The exact footprint of the buildings and access road/parking at the site is not yet determined and sagebrush may be impacted depending on the final design and layout on the site.

Wetland Communities

Wetland areas on Mountain Home AFB include any of the nine identified playas. None of the playas are located within the veterinary clinic or MWD kennel project area. The nearest playa is located approximately 2,000 feet east of the project site, east of the hospital. There would be no environmental consequence to this resource.

Threatened, Endangered, and Special Status Species/Communities

Species listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as threatened and endangered in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 are not likely to be adversely affected by the proposed action. There are no federally recognized threatened or endangered species or critical habitats located on base. The burrowing owl, a Bureau of Land Management state-listed species, is located on the base. The burrowing owl species occupies abandoned mammal burrows in disturbed areas with short vegetation in the surrounding area. No such habitat appears to be located in the proposed project area. There appears to be no significant impacts to this resource in the project area.

4.3.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

4.4 Cultural Resources

4.4.1 Proposed Action

No impacts to archaeological resources are expected under the proposed action. No significant archaeological resources have been identified in the proposed project area. No impacts to architectural resources are expected under the proposed action. The current veterinary clinic and MWD kennel buildings are not listed on the National Register as historic structures, nor are they World War II or Cold War structures.

4.4.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

4.5 Land Use and Transportation

4.5.1 Proposed Action

Land Use

According to the base's *General Plan*, the location of the proposed veterinary clinic and MWD kennel is designated as open space for future land use. The land use adjacent to the west is currently designated as Community (commercial). The hospital, located west of the proposed project site, is designated as medical, with Housing (accompanied) to the northeast.

Construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel may require changes to the base's *General Plan* with respect to future land use at the project site.

Transportation

Access to the project site would be provided by construction of a two-lane, asphalt-paved access road that would intersect with Hope Drive. The access road would begin at Hope Drive and run north approximately 180 feet before crossing over the railroad line. The access road would then turn slightly to the northwest and run approximately 30 feet to a "T" intersection. The parking lot for the veterinary clinic would begin approximately 60 feet southwest of the intersection and the parking lot for the MWD kennel would begin approximately 60 feet northeast of the intersection. Both lots would lie between the rail line and the JP-8 pipeline. The access road would cross the rail line. A railroad crossing would be constructed to ensure safe passage of vehicles over the rail line.

An increase in the traffic in the area would be expected during construction of the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. However, the increase due to construction vehicles would be short-term and would last only for the duration of construction. In the long-term, vehicular traffic making trips to the current veterinary clinic and MWD kennels would be diverted to the new location.

4.5.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

4.6 Hazardous Materials and Waste Management

4.6.1 Proposed Action

Hazardous Materials

Construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel may require the use of hazardous materials by contractor personnel. In accordance with the base's HAZMAT procedure, copies of Material Safety Data Sheets must be provided to the base and maintained on the construction site. The base would maintain any hazardous materials used by base personnel in the operation of the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. No adverse environmental consequences are anticipated from the proposed action with regard to hazardous materials.

Hazardous Waste

Hazardous waste, such as paints, adhesives and batteries, may be generated by contractor personnel during the construction of the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. Storage and disposal of these wastes would be the responsibility of the site contractor and the base's hazardous waste management program. No additional hazardous wastes are anticipated to be

generated by base personnel during the operation and maintenance of the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. No adverse environmental consequences are anticipated from proposed action with regard to hazardous waste.

The proposed road for access to the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel may impact the outer edge of ERP site ST-35 (figure 3-3). Residual jet fuel contaminated soils may be encountered during site disturbance and grading, which may require handling and disposal as a hazardous waste.

Solid Waste

During site preparation, demolition of the existing veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would generate some construction debris. As possible, concrete, asphalt, and metal debris would be recycled, with other materials being disposed of as solid waste. Operations of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be expected to generate any additional solid waste than is generated by current operations. No adverse environmental consequences would be expected with the implementation of the proposed action.

4.6.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

4.7 Socioeconomic and Environmental Justice

4.7.1 Proposed Action

Socioeconomic

Construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel, in the short-term, would support construction jobs. Operationally, no jobs would be added or eliminated by relocating the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel.

Infrastructure

Interconnections to the existing Mountain Home AFB utility infrastructure are available to support the construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. Consumption of potable water, electricity, and natural gas would not be expected to increase with the operation of the facilities. No adverse environmental consequences are anticipated with the construction of the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel at this location.

4.7.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

4.8 Noise

Noise impact analyses typically evaluate potential changes to existing noise environments that would result from implementation of a proposal. Potential changes in the noise environment can be (1) beneficial (i.e., if they reduce the number of sensitive receptors exposed to unacceptable noise levels); (2) negligible (i.e., if the total area exposed to unacceptable noise levels is essentially unchanged); or (3) adverse (i.e., if they result in increased exposure to unacceptable levels).

4.8.1 Proposed Action

Implementation of the proposed action would have minor, temporary increases in localized noise levels in the vicinity of the project area during construction. The base is an active military facility that typically experiences high noise levels from daily flight operations. The proposed action location is located in the below 65 dBA noise zone. Use of heavy equipment for site preparation and development (i.e., grading, fill, and construction) would generate noise. However, noise would be similar to typical construction noise, last only the duration of the specific construction activities, and could be reduced by the use of equipment sound mufflers and restricting construction activity to normal working hours (i.e., between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.). Compared with aircraft noise, noise produced by construction would generally be more impulsive, relatively lower in magnitude, and spread out during the day. These localized noise increases may disrupt patients in the existing hospital located approximately 800 feet southeast of the proposed action location. The noise disruptions from construction would be temporary and would be limited to daytime hours; therefore, impacts are considered insignificant.

The proposed action location is located in a lower noise zone than the current locations of the veterinary clinic and MWD kennel. The base pet population being serviced by the clinic and the MWDs will benefit by the relocation to a lower noise zone. In addition, by relocating the MWD kennel to the below 65 dBA noise zone, the kennel will be in compliance with AFI 31-202.

4.8.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, a new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would not be constructed and the veterinary and MWD kennel needs would continue to be met by existing facilities. There would be no environmental consequences to this resource.

5.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

5.1 Cumulative Effects

This section provides (1) a definition of cumulative effects, (2) a description of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions relevant to cumulative effects, and (3) and evaluation of cumulative effects potentially resulting from these interactions.

5.1.1 Definition of Cumulative Effects

CEQ regulations stipulate that the cumulative effects analysis within an EA should consider the potential environmental impacts resulting from “the incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions” (40 CFR 1508.7). Recent CEQ guidance in Considering Cumulative Effects affirms this requirement, stating that the first steps in assessing cumulative effects involve defining the scope of the other actions and their interrelationship with the proposed action. The scope must consider geographic and temporal overlaps among the proposed action and other actions. It must also evaluate the nature of interactions among these actions.

Cumulative effects are most likely to arise when a relationship or synergism exists between a proposed action and other actions expected to occur in a similar location or during a similar time period. Actions overlapping with or in close proximity to the proposed action would be expected to have more potential for a relationship than actions that may be geographically separated. Similarly, actions that coincide, even partially, in time would tend to offer a higher potential for cumulative effects.

To identify cumulative effects, this EA analysis addresses three questions:

1. Does a relationship exist such that elements of the proposed action might interact with elements of past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions?
2. If one or more of the elements of the proposed action and another action could be expected to interact, would the proposed action affect or be affected by impacts of the other action?
3. If such a relationship exists, does an assessment reveal any potentially significant impacts not identified when the proposed action is considered alone?

In this EA, an effort has been made to identify all actions that are being considered and that are in the planning phase at this time. To the extent that details regarding such actions exist and the actions have a potential to interact with the proposed action in this EA, these actions are included in this cumulative analysis. This approach enables decision makers to have the most current information available so that they can evaluate the environmental consequences of the proposed action.

5.1.2 Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

This EA applies a stepped approach to provide decision makers with not only the cumulative effects of the proposed action but also the incremental contribution of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions.

Past and Present Actions Relevant To The Proposed Action

Mountain Home AFB is an active military installation that undergoes continuous change in mission and in training requirements. This process of change is consistent with the United States defense policy that the Air Force must be ready to respond to threats to American interests throughout the world. In 2002 the Air Force implemented a force structure change that removed six B-1 aircraft decreasing personnel by 504, removed six operational KC-135 aircraft decreasing personnel by 225, and added six operational F-15 aircraft increasing personnel by 151. The base, like any other major institution, also requires new occasional construction, facility improvements, and infrastructure upgrades.

Incremental Impacts of the Proposed Action with Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

During the timeframe FY01 to FY05 Mountain Home AFB has proposed a number of actions that are independent of the proposed action and would be implemented irrespective of a decision on the proposed veterinary clinic and MWD kennel.

5.1.3 Analysis of Cumulative Impacts

The following analysis examines how the impacts of these other actions might be affected by those resulting from the proposed action at Mountain Home AFB and whether such a relationship would result in potentially significant impacts not identified when the proposed action is considered alone.

A previous EA for the implementation of a force structure change at Mountain Home AFB did not identify any significant environmental consequences (USAF 2002). The result of the force structure change left Mountain Home AFB operating at levels below those occurring in the early 1990's.

Although not fully analyzed at this time in separate environmental analysis, none of the future infrastructure actions would be expected to result in more than negligible impacts either individually or cumulatively. All actions affect very specific, circumscribed areas, and the magnitude of the actions is minimal. Given that the proposed action would likewise have a minimal effect within the base, the combined impacts of these actions would remain well below the threshold of significance for any resource category.

5.2 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

NEPA requires that environmental analysis include identification of “...any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.” Irreversible and irretrievable resource commitments are related to the use of nonrenewable resources and the effects that the uses of these resources have on future generations. Irreversible effects primarily result from the use or destruction of a specific resource (e.g., energy and minerals) that cannot be replaced within a reasonable time frame. Irretrievable resource commitments involve the loss in value of an affected resource that cannot be restored as a result of the action (e.g., extinction of a threatened or endangered species or the disturbance of a cultural site.)

For the proposed action, most resource commitments are neither irreversible nor irretrievable. Most environmental consequences are short term and temporary (such as air emissions from construction) or longer lasting but negligible (e.g., utility increases). Those limited resources that may involve a possible irreversible or irretrievable commitment under the proposed action are discussed below.

Construction of the new veterinary clinic and MWD kennel would require consumption of limited amounts of materials typically associated with interior and exterior construction (e.g., concrete, wiring, insulation, and windows). The amount of these materials used is not expected to significantly decrease the availability of the resources.

6.0 REFERENCES

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7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

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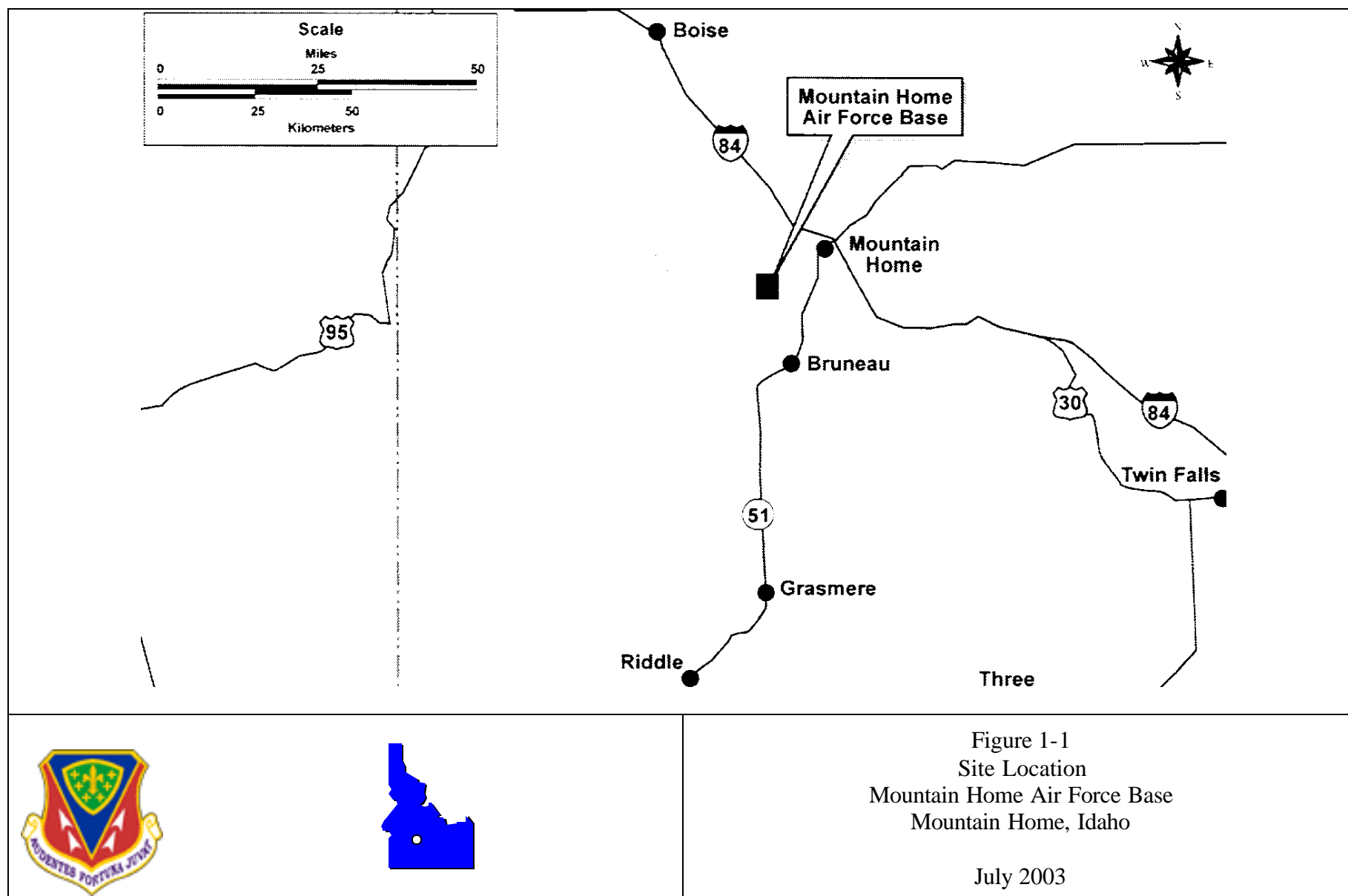
Years of Experience: 13

Lorrie Taylor

B.S., Human Resources, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1994

Years of Experience: 8

FIGURES



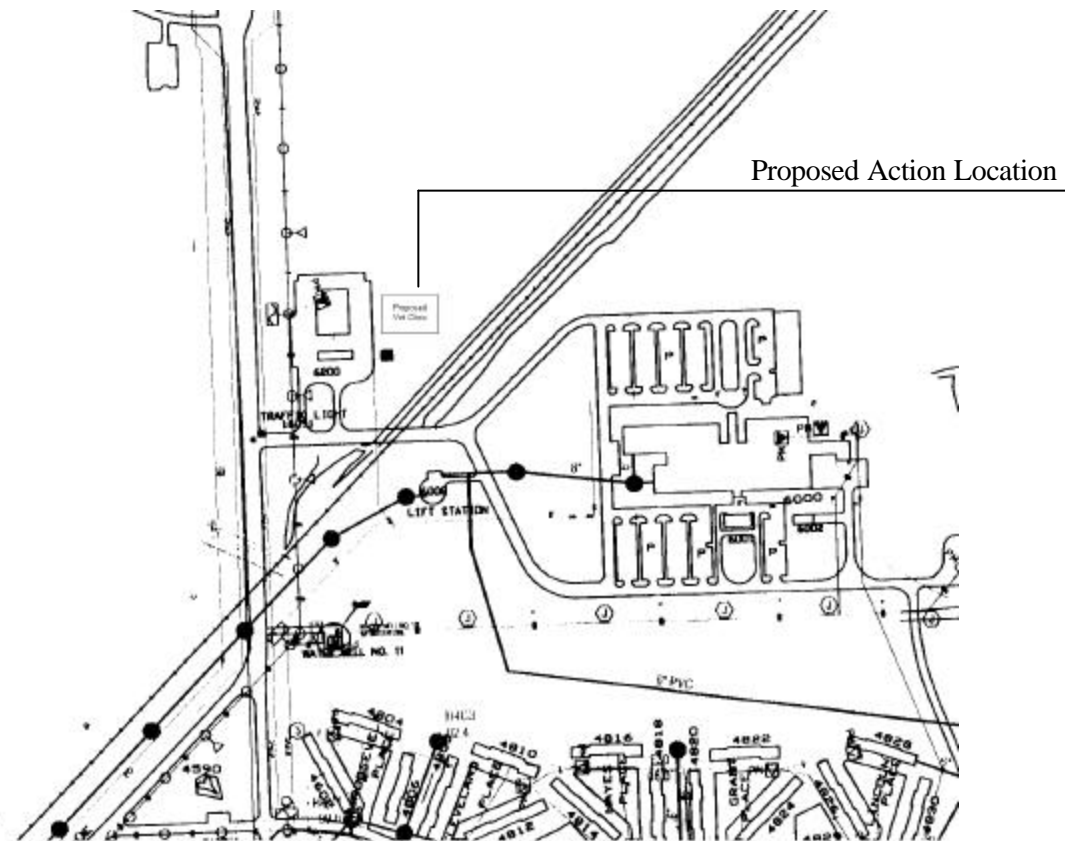
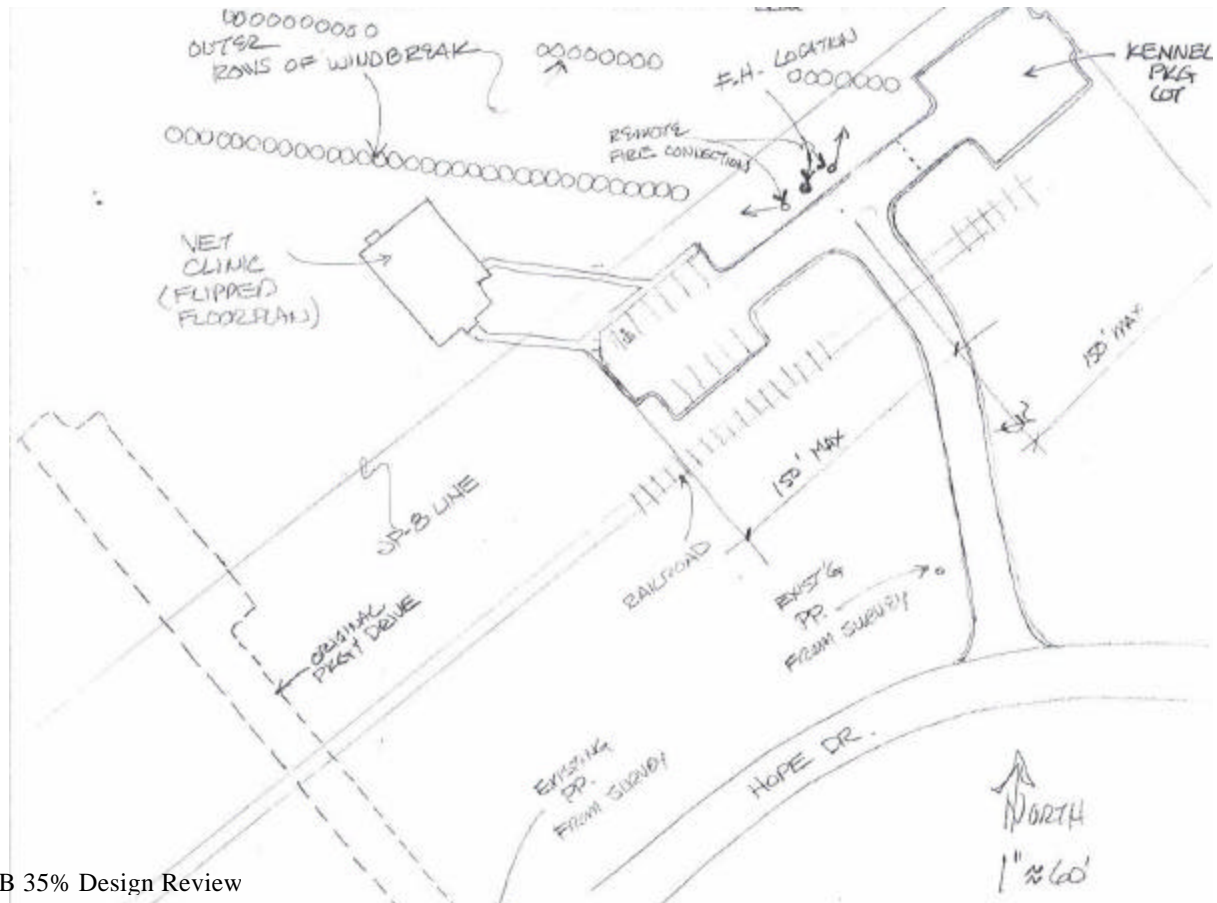


Figure 2-1
Site Location Plan of Proposed Veterinary Clinic and MWD Kennel
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Mountain Home, Idaho

July 2003

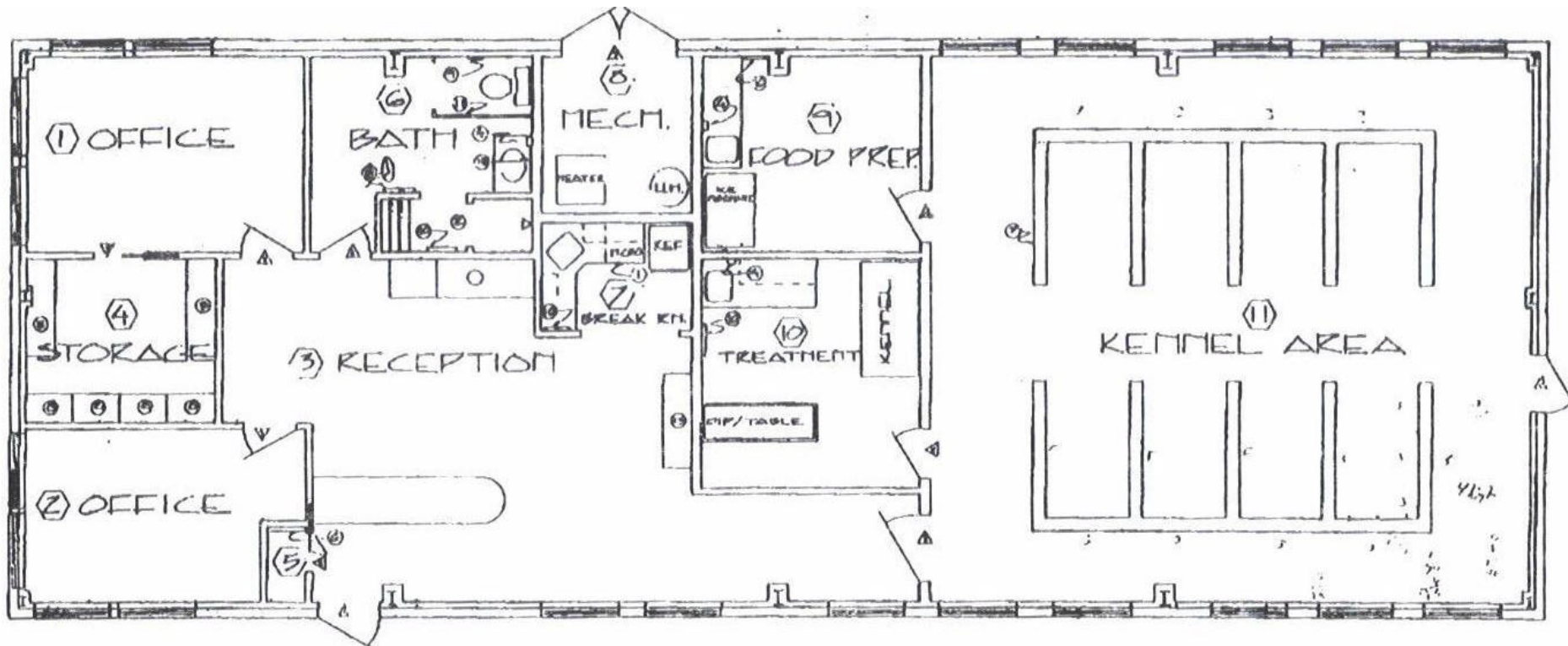


Source: Mountain Home AFB 35% Design Review



Figure 2-2
Site Layout Plan for Proposed Veterinary Clinic
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Mountain Home, Idaho

July 2003

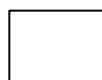
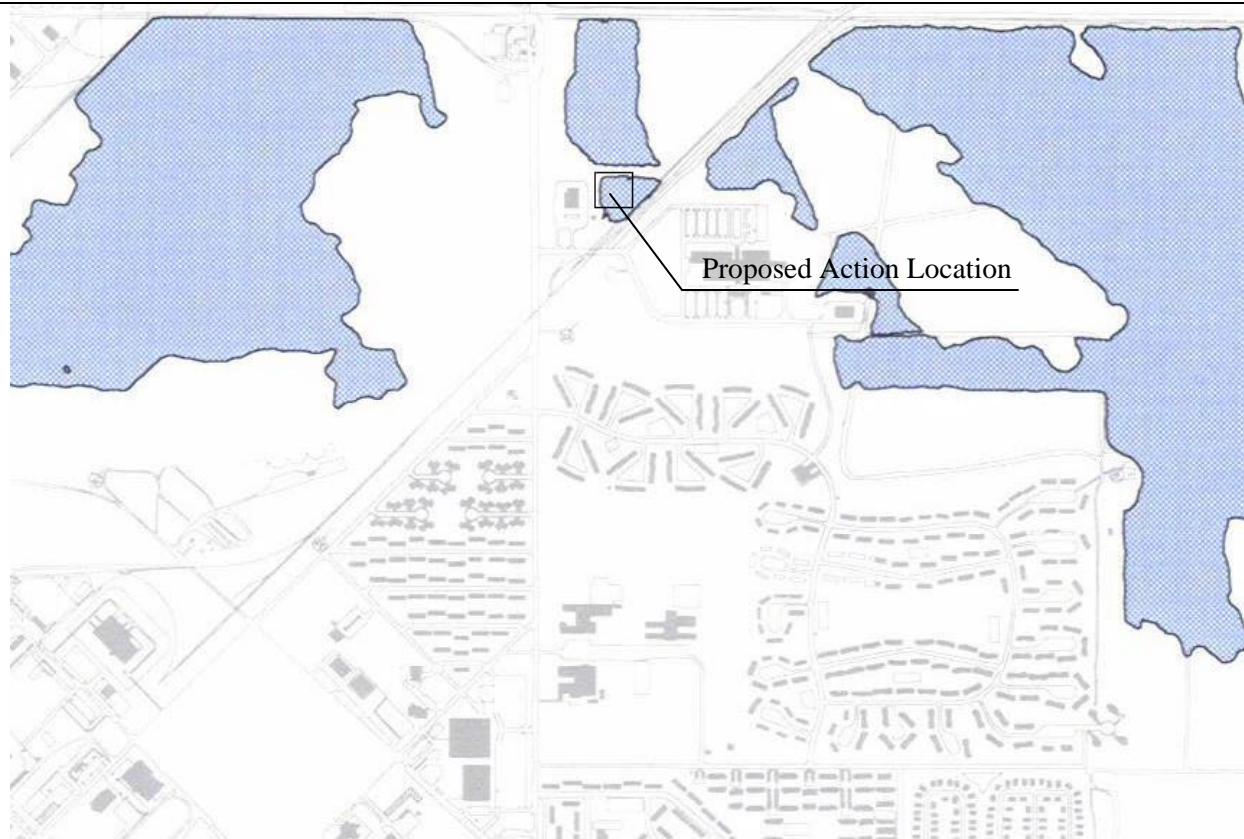


Source: Forrest M. Jackson, Inc.



Figure 2-3
Site Layout Plan for Proposed MWD Kennel
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Mountain Home, Idaho

July 2003



Sagebrush Protection Area

Figure 3-1
Sagebrush Protection Areas at
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Mountain Home, Idaho

July 2003

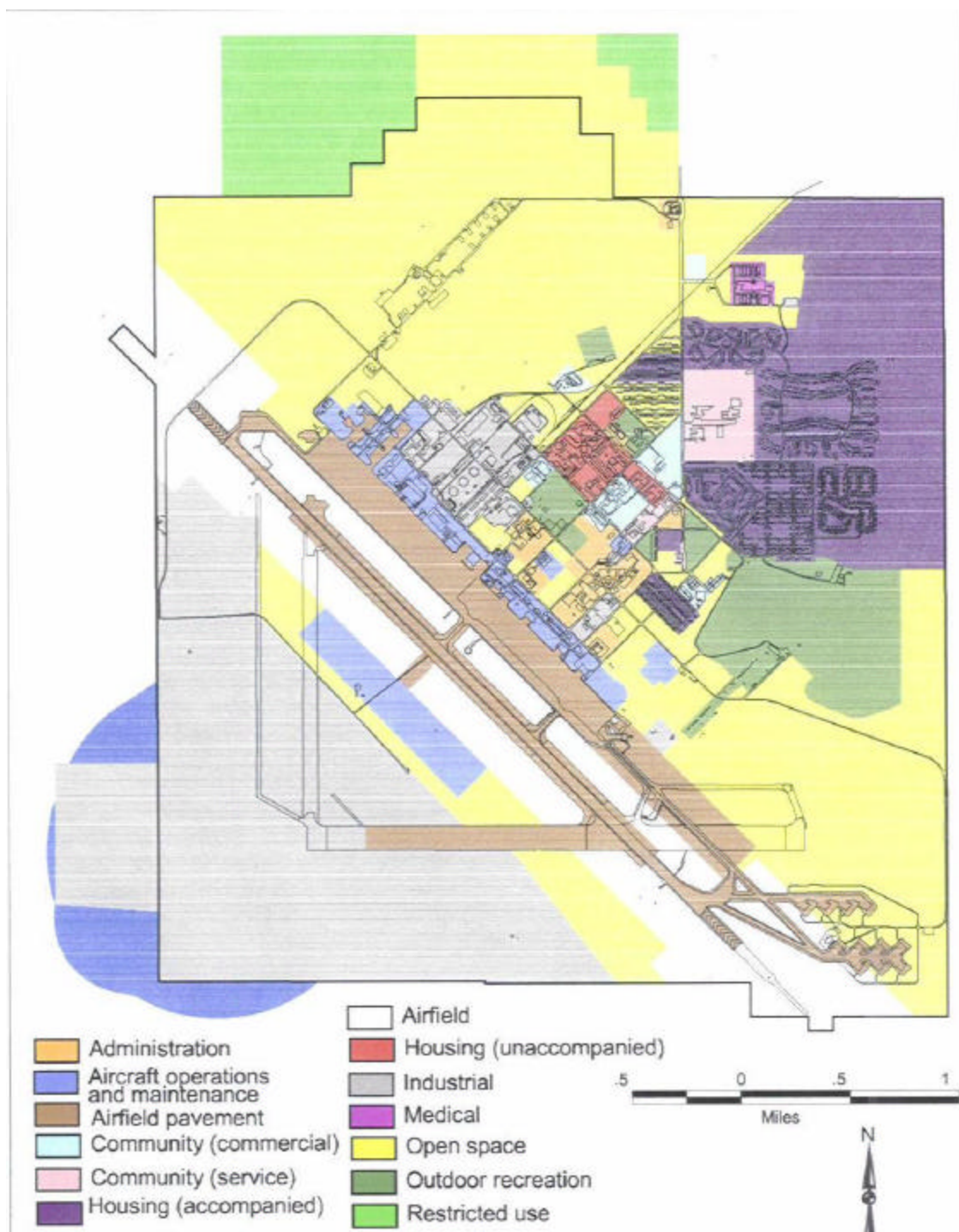
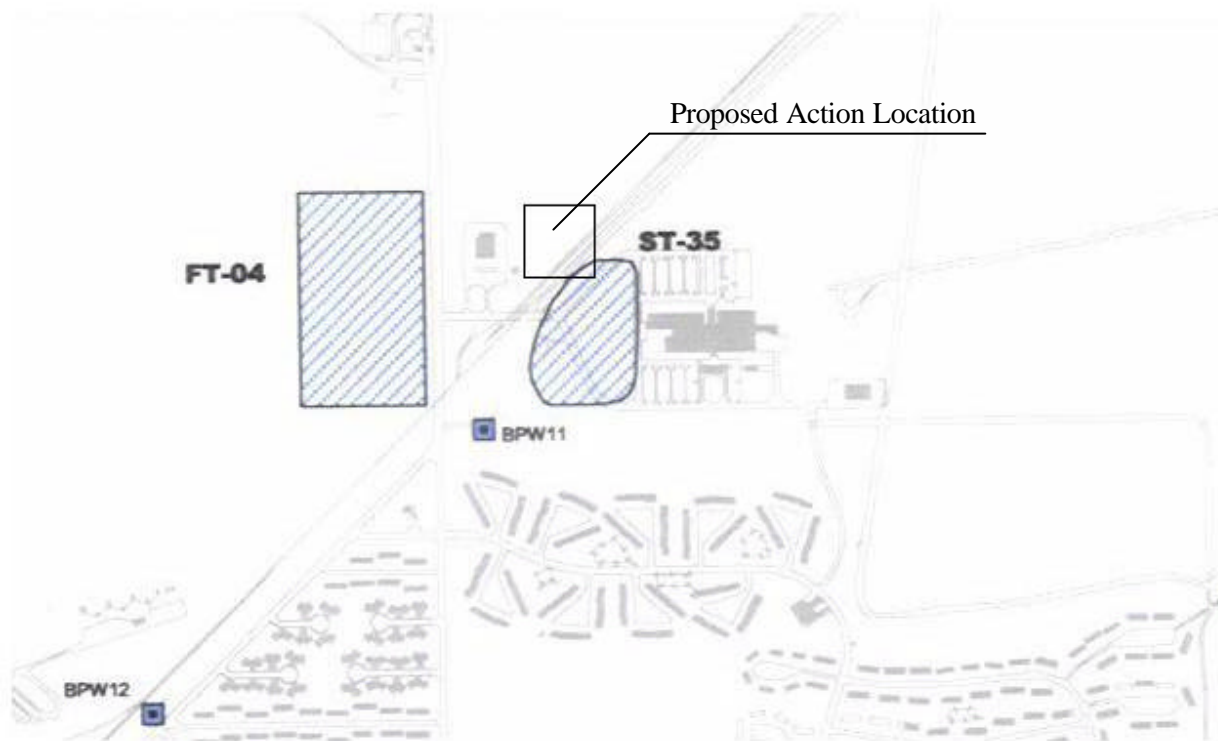


Figure 3-2
Future Land Use Plan for
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Mountain Home, Idaho

July 2003



ERP Area

Figure 3-3
Environmental Restoration Program Areas at
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Mountain Home, Idaho

July 2003

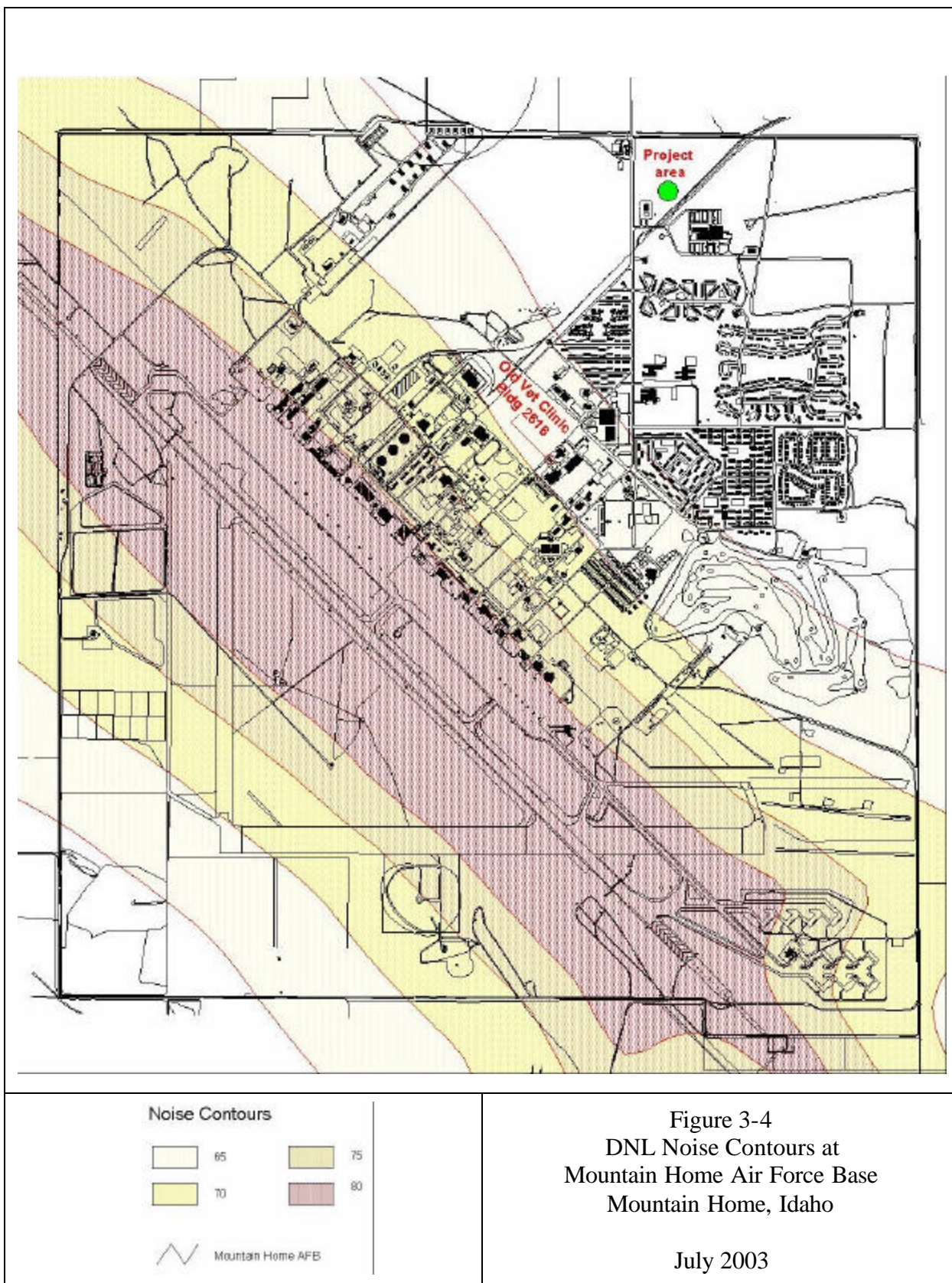


Figure 3-4
DNL Noise Contours at
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Mountain Home, Idaho

July 2003

APPENDIX A

CONSULTATION LETTERS

Agencies Contacted

State Historic Preservation Office
Attn: Ms. Susan Neitzel
210 Main Street
Boise, ID 83702-7264

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Attn: Ms. Anne Badgely
Regional Office – Northwest
911 North East 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232

Idaho Fish & Game
Attn: Mr. Tracey Trent
600 South Walnut
PO Box 25
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Governor's Special Assistant for Military Affairs
Attn: Mr. Colonel William Ritchey (retired)
150 South 3rd East
Mountain Home, Idaho 83647

Elmore Soil Conservation District (III)
Attn: Ron Blake
795 S. Haskett
Mountain Home, ID 83647-3378



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
VETERINARY SERVICE ACTIVITY
3400 LEEBURN DRIVE
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22047-5430

14 Jan 1987

Scott R. Severin

Chief of the Division

Dr. Ted W. Hoffman
Knight Veterinary Clinic
PO Box 640
Mountain Home TN 37647

Dear Dr. Hoffman:

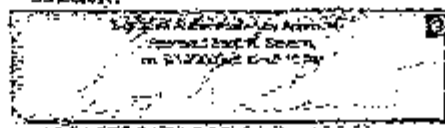
This replies to the concerns you expressed in your June 10 message to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) regarding the Mountain Home Air Force Base Veterinary Treatment Facility (VTF).

As with all military VTFs, the Mountain Home VTF must operate in compliance with the Military Veterinary Treatment Facility Policy, which was recently revised by the AVMA and the Department of Defense Veterinary Service Activity. As an integral part of the installation commander's medical community, the VTF provides full medical and surgical care to military working dogs and other government owned animals, in addition to limited privately owned animal care. Privately owned animals are examined, diagnosed, and treated for the prevention and control of zoonotic diseases, or conditions that may constitute a military community health problem. Surgical and medical care for privately owned animals is authorized for cases involving stray animals under programs authorized for population control; cases which are part of the authorized command-directed program to maintain clinical proficiency; and cases that require stabilization before the patient is referred to a civilian veterinarian for definitive treatment.

In order to accomplish this animal medicine mission in a professional manner, adequate facilities and equipment are necessary. The current VTF is inadequate with respect to size and function. The lack of a dedicated surgical suite, no radiology, and inadequate space impact our ability to provide the highest quality of veterinary care. The proposed construction project for the VTF is intended to correct these deficiencies and to bring the VTF up to acceptable standards. Any increase in facility size is not intended to facilitate the expansion or scope of the services provided.

Point of contact for this issue is the undersigned at (703) 681-3063.

Sincerely,



Scott R. Severin
Colonel, U.S. Army
Director, DOD Veterinary Service Activity

CE,
Commander, U.S. Army Veterinary Command
American Veterinary Medical Association

KNIGHT VETERINARY CLINIC
220 Elmcrest, Mountain Home, ID 83647
308-587-7941

366th Fighter Wing
Public Affairs Office
Attn: Lt. Campbell
Mountain Home Air Force Base, ID 83647

Lloyd Knight, DVM
Knight Veterinary Clinic
220 Elmcrest St
Mountain Home ID 83647

June 27, 2003

Dear Lt. Campbell:

The staff at Knight Veterinary Clinic includes four veterinarians and 11 veterinary and administrative assistants. We provide veterinary services for clients from Mountain Home and the surrounding area, including the direct and indirect demand for our services that is stimulated by the presence of Mountain Home Air Force Base.

This comment on the Environmental Assessment for Construction Of a New Veterinary Clinic and Military Working Dog Kennel at Mountain Home Air Force Base, ID is made because we believe the assessment of the socioeconomic effects of this action is inadequate. We believe that there may be a significant adverse impact to the service available to personnel at MHAFB and the surrounding area if the new clinic is built and if the Military Veterinary Treatment Facilities Policy is not carefully followed.

The Policy specifies that all assistants are under the direct supervision of the veterinary officer. Further, the Policy states that cosmetic and elective procedures or invasive surgeries will not be performed unless for population control, for limited medical and surgical cases to maintain clinical proficiency or for stabilization prior to referral.

We believe that the Policy means that a veterinarian must be present in the facility to provide direct supervision to assistants. Additionally, to provide a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship, the veterinarians should have direct knowledge of a specific medical case and be available for follow-up on that case if needed.

The proposed facility will not only make it easier for the veterinarians assigned to MHAFB to meet their mission, it will also make it easier to diverge from the Policy. A new Base facility, that provides more extensive services than in the past or than specified by the Policy, will adversely impact the ability of private facilities to maintain staff and infrastructure to provide services to the entire population of Mountain Home and the surrounding area.

A positive and mutually beneficial relationship, which has made veterinary services available to Base personnel and the general public, has often existed between the Base and surrounding facilities and veterinarians. While we have expressed our concerns regarding the new facility and the Policy, if a positive and mutually beneficial relationship exists between private and Base veterinary organizations, we believe that the mission of both can be attained.

Sincerely yours,

Lloyd L. Knight, DVM
Lloyd L. Knight, DVM

APPENDIX B

PERMITS

Permits will be included in this section as they are received.

APPENDIX C

SPECIES OF POTENTIAL CONCERN

**Table C-1 Common or Characteristic Flora and Fauna and
Associated Habitats on Mountain Home AFB
(Page 1 of 2)**

<i>Species</i>	<i>Associated Habitat</i>
<i>Plants</i>	
Biscuitroot Lomatium sp.	Sagebrush
Bottlebrush squirreltail Sitanion hystrix	Sagebrush/ Grasslands/ Urban
Bur buttercup Ranunculus testiculatus	Disturbed ¹ /Sagebrush/ Urban
Cheatgrass Bromus tectorum	Disturbed ¹ /Sagebrush/ Grasslands
Halogeton Halogeton glomeratus	Disturbed ¹ /Sagebrush/ Grasslands
Indian ricegrass Oryzopsis hymenoides	Sagebrush
Lupine Lupinus sp.	Sagebrush
Russian thistle Sasola kali	Disturbed
Sagebrush Artemisia spp.	Sagebrush/ Grasslands
Sandberg's bluegrass Poa sandbergii	Sagebrush/ Grasslands
Tumble mustard Sisymbrium altissimum	Disturbed/ Grasslands
Winterfat Eurotia lanata	Sagebrush
Yellow salsify Tragopogon dubius	Sagebrush/ Urban
<i>Amphibians</i>	
Pacific tree frog Pseudacris regilla	Aquatic
<i>Reptiles</i>	
Western terrestrial garter snake Thamnophis elegans	Urban/ Various
Gopher snake Pituophis catenifer	Various

**Table C-1 Common or Characteristic Flora and Fauna and
Associated Habitats on Mountain Home AFB
(Page 2 of 2)**

<i>Species</i>	<i>Associated Habitat</i>
<i>Birds</i>	
American robin Turdus migratorius	Various
Brown-headed cowbird Molothrus ater	Agriculture/ Urban
Canada goose Branta Canadensis	Aquatic/ Urban/ Agriculture
Common goldeneye Bucephala clangula	Aquatic
European starling Sturnus vulgaris	Urban/ Various
House finch Carpodacus mexicanus	Urban/ Grasslands/ Shrubland/ Canyon
Killdeer Charadrius vociferous	Wetlands or dry uplands
Mallard Anas platyrhynchos	Aquatic/ Urban Deleted Biscuitroot – came after mallard & before hawk
Red-tailed hawk Buteo jamaicensis	Various
Red-winged blackbird Agelaius phoeniceus	Wetlands
Western meadowlark Sturnella neglecta	Sagebrush or other shrubland
<i>Mammals</i>	
Badger Taxidea taxus	Shrublands/ Grasslands
Little brown bats Myotis spp.	Various
Coyote Canis latrans	Shrublands/ Grasslands
Hoary bat Lasiurus cinereus	Various
Silver-haired bat Lasionycteris noctivagans	Various
Townsend's ground squirrel Spermophilus townsendii	Sagebrush/ Grasslands
Vole Microtus spp.	Various

¹ = Primary Habitat

**Table C-2 Threatened, Endangered, and Special-Status
Species/ Communities That Occur or Potentially Occur on Mountain Home AFB
(Page 1 of 2)**

<i>Species</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Areas of Occurrence</i>
<i>Lichens</i>		
Wovenspore lichen Texosporium sancti-jacobi	FSC	Sagebrush steppe with native bunch grass component. No records from base.
<i>Plants</i>		
Bugleg goldenweed Haplopappus Insecticuriis	FSC	Disturbed sagebrush communities with grass component. No records from base.
Davis' Peppergrass Lepidium davisii	FSC	Davis's Peppergrass occurs on playas, typically in association with Wyoming Big Sagebrush. Found on the Small Arms Range and on Base.
Slickpot peppergrass Lepidium papilliferum	C	Small sodic slickspots in shrubsteppe habitat. Endemic to western Idaho. No records from base.
Ute ladies'-tresses Spiranthes diluvialis	LT	Sandy gravel bars in a riverine situation. No records from western Idaho. No habitat on base.
<i>Invertebrates</i>		
Bliss Rapids snail Taylorconcha serpenticola	FT	Aquatic habitats. Does not occur on base.
Idaho springsnail Fontelicella idahoensis	FE	Aquatic habitats. Does not occur on base.
Snake River physa snail Physa natricina	FE	Aquatic habitats. Does not occur on base.
<i>Amphibians</i>		
Northern leopard frog Rana pipiens	FSC/SSC	Riparian areas with high vegetation. No records from base.
Western toad Bufo boreas	FSC/SSC	Variety of forested, meadow, and desert habitats in proximity to appropriate aquatic breeding habitat. Not well known from southwestern Idaho. No records from base.
<i>Reptiles</i>		
Ground snake Sonora Semiannulata	SSC	Sagebrush, grasslands, and salt desert scrub with loose or sandy soil. Does not occur on base.
Longnose snake Rhinocheilus lecontei	SSC	Shrub habitats and grasslands with rocky component. Does not occur on base.

**Table C-2 Threatened, Endangered, and Special-Status
Species/ Communities That Occur or Potentially Occur on Mountain Home AFB
(Page 2 of 2)**

<i>Species</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Areas of Occurrence</i>
<i>Birds</i>		
Bald eagle Haliaeetus leucocephalus	FT/SE	Near rivers and lakes with tall trees or cliffs. Winters along Bruneau, Owyhee, and Snake rivers. No habitat on base. Has potential to range onto base from Snake River habitats.
Black tern Chlidonias niger	SSC	Lakeshores and wetlands. Potential habitat exists, but no confirmed occurrences on the base or in the airspace.
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse Tympanuchus phasianellus	FSC/SSC	Open grasslands and shrub habitats in proximity to stands of low growing trees. Extirpated from most of its former range. No records from base.
Long-billed curlew Numenius americanus	FSC	Open grasslands in landscapes with good visibility. May occur in non-native vegetation and near agricultural fields. Birds observed on base.
Western burrowing owl Athene cunicularia hypugaea	SSC	Grasslands and shrublands. Frequents disturbed habitats. Associated with Townsend's ground squirrel and badger burrows. Four use areas identified on base.
<i>Mammals</i>		
Pygmy rabbit Brachylagus idahoensis	SSC/SGSC	Occurs in dense stands of tall sagebrush (big sagebrush). Distribution not well described. No habitat on base. No records on base.